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INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 1350  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0161

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 003278

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STATE FOR IO AND EUR/AGS - SAINT-ANDRE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/08/2016  
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [UNHRC](#) [AU](#)  
SUBJECT: AUSTRIA ON BOARD ON UN THIRD COMMITTEE COUNTRY  
RESOLUTIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: A. STATE 184178  
[1](#)B. VIENNA 3245  
[1](#)C. STATE 182267  
[1](#)D. STATE 183547

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Gregory E. Phillips. Reason: 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (SBU) Charge conveyed ref (a) points on country resolutions to Austrian MFA Human Rights chief Engelbert Theuermann on November 8.

[1](#)2. (C) Theuermann said Austria -- and all EU member states -- opposed, in principle, any no-action motions on human rights issues. Therefore, Austria would vote against them, and would lobby other countries to vote against them, as well.

[1](#)3. (C) On retaliatory resolutions, Theuermann agreed fully that all the texts in question were unfounded. He added that they were dangerous, because they sought to limit the principle -- which the Austrians support entirely -- that country resolutions are both legitimate and necessary. Theuermann said it was "especially ludicrous" that Belarus, the only country in Europe that does not meet the minimum human rights standards necessary to be a member of the Council of Europe, was proposing a resolution against a democracy like the United States. However, he said, we had to be careful that we dealt with these texts in such a way as to avoid undermining our credibility or our openness to debate. He had therefore asked the Austrian mission in New York to encourage the Finnish EU presidency to work closely with the U.S. and Canadian delegations on tactics.

[1](#)4. (C) Theuermann expressed gratitude that the U.S. was prepared to modify the text on Uzbekistan to take account of the November 4 meetings between Uzbekistan and the EU. He offered the information that it was the Germans who were unenthusiastic about an Uzbekistan resolution at the moment. U.S. flexibility would help bring the Germans on board, he said.  
Phillips